

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 L-03 DLOS-06 SAL-01 CG-00 DOTE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6885
INFO COMICEDEFOR
CINCLANT
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1670

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIS, EEC, IO
SUBJECT: GOI SEES NO THREAT IN ALLEGED REMARKS BY EEC COMMISSIONER

REF: REYKJAVIK 1664

1. MFA DEPPERM UNDERSEC HELGASON TOLD EMBOFF DECEMBER 21
THAT GOI IS SATISFIED WITH EXPLANATION RECEIVED FROM EEC
COMMISSIONER FINN GUNDELACH, WHOSE ALLGED REMARKS AT
PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY HAD BEEN WIDELY CONSTRUED
HERE AS EECE THREAT OF POSSIBLE TRADE COERCION AGAINST
ICELAND. ACCORDING TO REUTERS DISPATCH FROM BRUSSELS,
CARRIED IN ALL LOCAL PAPERS, GUNDELACH HAD EXPRESSED
DISAPPOINTMENT OVER LACK OF RESULTS FROM ICELAND-EEC
FISHERIES TALKS AND HAD GONE ON TO ISSUE "SERIOUS
WARNING" THAT GOI SHOULD EXAMINE FISHERIES ISSUE IN
CONTEXT OF OVERALL RELATIONS WITH COMMUNITY.

2. HELGASON, WHO HAD JUST BEEN ON PHONE WITH GUNDELACH,
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SAID LATTER HAD STRESSED THAT HE HAD BEEN MISQUOTED
AND HAD URGED GOI NOT TO ENTER INTO "WAR OF WORDS"
OVER INCIDENT. GUNDELACH REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT WHILE
THERE WAS DISAPPOINTMENT IN BRUSSELS OVER LACK OF
PROGRESS IN TALKS, THERE WAS NO SUGGESTION THAT
TRADE OR OTHER PRESSURE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR

AND THAT HIS INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO PROCEED WITH NEGOTIATIONS ON SAME BASIS AS BEFORE.

3. HELGASON SAID HE HAD NOT SEEN PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY EEC DELEGATION DURING DECEMBER 16-20 BRUSSELS TALKS (REFTEL). HE DESCRIBED THEM, HOWEVER, AS VERY PRELIMINARY IN NATURE: "A FIRST DRAFT OF A WORKING PAPER". IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT COMMUNITY HAD NOT SUGGESTED ANY SPECIFIC CATCH TONNAGES BUT HAD PROPOSED THAT PROVISION FOR RECIPROCAL FISHING BE CONTAINED IN WHAT WOULD BE ESSENTIALLY CONSERVATION AGREEMENT WITH CATCH FIGURES TO FLUCTUATE DEPENDING ON CONDITION OF STOCKS.

4. HELGASON ADDED THAT VIRTUALLY UNTIL END OF LATEST ROUND OF TALKS YESTERDAY - THEY HAD RECESSED UNTIL LATE JANUARY - BRITISH AND GUNDELACH HAD HELD OUT HOPE THAT ICELAND WOULD UNILATERALLY PROVIDE FOR "TRANSITION PERIOD" OF RESUMED FISHING IN ICELAND'S WATERS BY UK TRAWLERS. ASKED IF GOI HAD GIVEN ANYONE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS FEASIBLE, HELGASON REPLIED IN NEGATIVE, NOTING THAT SUCH MOVE WOULD BE POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.
BLAKE

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